

Appl. No. 10/800,076
Amdt. Dated: August 15, 2005
Reply to Office Action of
May 13, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A portable liquid container comprising:

a vessel defining a liquid storage chamber and having a spout communicating with the chamber,

a handle assembly connected to the vessel and including a hollow portion communicating with the chamber,

a closure member disposed entirely within the spout and capable of ~~for~~ movement between a closed position closing the spout and an open position accommodating flow of liquid through the spout,

a bias structure resiliently urging the closure member to the closed position,

an actuator carried by the handle assembly and capable of ~~for~~ movement between actuating and release positions, and

a linkage assembly extending through the hollow portion of the handle assembly and coupling the actuator to the closure member for moving the closure member within the spout to its ~~closed~~ open position in a direction inwardly of the spout in response to movement of the actuator to its actuating position.

2. (Original) The container of claim 1, wherein the closure member is pivotally movable between its open and closed positions and the actuator is pivotally movable between its actuating and release positions.

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3. (Original) The container of claim 1, wherein the actuator includes a cam structure and the linkage assembly includes a cam follower structure disposed in camming engagement with the cam structure.

4. (Original) The container of claim 1, wherein the vessel is provided with a filling aperture in an upper end thereof.

5. (Original) The container of claim 4, and further comprising a lid removably mounted on the vessel for closing the filling aperture.

6. (Original) The container of claim 4, wherein the handle assembly spans the filling aperture.

7. (Original) The container of claim 1, and further comprising a liner disposed within the spout, the closure member being mounted on the liner structure.

8. (Currently amended) A portable liquid container comprising:
a vessel defining a liquid storage chamber and having a spout communicating with the chamber,

a handle assembly including a hollow metal tube connected to the vessel and communicating with the chamber,

the handle assembly including a thermally insulating sleeve assembly enclosing a portion of the tube and having an actuator portion movable between actuating and release positions,

a closure member disposed entirely within the spout for movement between a closed position closing the spout and an open position accommodating flow of liquid through the spout,

a bias structure resiliently urging the closure member to the closed position, and

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a linkage assembly extending through the tube and coupling the actuator portion to the closure member for moving the closure member within the spout to its ~~closed~~ open position in a direction inwardly of the spout in response to movement of the actuator portion to its actuating position.

9. (Original) The container of claim 8, wherein the sleeve assembly includes a portion overlying the tube, the actuator portion being disposed beneath the tube.

10. (Original) The container of claim 8, wherein the actuator portion includes a cam structure and the linkage assembly includes a cam follower structure disposed in camming engagement with the cam structure.

11. (Original) The container of claim 8, wherein the linkage assembly includes spacing structure for centering within the tube the portion of the linkage assembly extending through the tube.

12. (Original) The container of claim 8, wherein the tube has a slot formed therein, the actuator portion extending through the slot for engagement with the linkage assembly.

13. (Original) The container of claim 8, wherein the actuator portion is carried by the sleeve assembly for pivotal movement between the actuating and release positions thereof.

14. (Currently amended) A method of opening and closing a spout of a kettle having a storage chamber and a hollow tubular handle communicating with the chamber, the method comprising the steps of:

disposing a closure member entirely within the spout and an actuator on the handle,

concealing a linkage assembly within the chamber and the handle for coupling the actuator to the closure member, and

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moving the actuator in response to grasping of the handle by a user's hand to move the closure member within the spout inwardly of the spout to an open position.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14, and further comprising the step of moving the linkage assembly coaxially within the handle in response to movement of the actuator.

16. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14, and further comprising the step of thermally insulating at least a portion of the tubular handle to protect a user's hand.

17. (Currently amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of moving includes the step of pivotally moving the actuator and the closure member.

18. (Currently amended) The method of claim 17, and further comprising the step of leaving a portion of the tubular handle exposed to view.